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United States Patent [19]

Risner, Jr. et al.

[11] Patent Number: 6,099,882

[45] Date of Patent: Aug. 8, 2000

[54] **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ROASTING AND SMOKING SKINNED FOOD PRODUCTS**

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[73] Assignee: California Fire-Roasted, L.L.C., West Sacramento, Calif.

[21] Appl. No.: 09/327,115

[22] Filed: Jun. 7, 1999

Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation of application No. 09/190,103, Nov. 12, 1998, abandoned.

[60] Provisional application No. 60/098,562, Nov. 12, 1997.

[51] Int. Cl.⁷ A23L 1/01

[52] U.S. Cl. 426/314; 426/465; 426/466; 426/469; 426/478; 426/479; 426/481; 426/482; 99/443 C, 99/469; 99/477; 99/482; 99/484; 99/567; 99/584

[58] Field of Search 426/314, 465, 426/466, 469, 478, 479, 481, 482, 483; 99/443 C, 469, 477, 386, 482, 518, 567, 584, 484

[56] **References Cited****U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

5,447,737 9/1995 Blandine et al. 426/484

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A system for preparing a skinned food product includes a roasting unit, a smoking chamber, and a conveyor system for transporting the skinned food product through the roasting unit and through the smoking chamber. The roasting unit has a heated zone for at least partially loosening the skin of the skinned food product. The heat in the heated zone may also blacken portions of the skinned food product. The conveyor system rotates the skinned food product as the product passes through the heated zone. The contact with the smoke in the smoking chamber provides the skinned food product with a desired flavor. A method for preparing a skinned food product includes contacting the product with heat to at least partially loosen a skin thereof, and contacting the product with smoke for a period of time sufficient to provide the product with a smoked flavor. The system and method may be used to prepare skinned food products such as tomatoes, peppers, onions, garlic, corn, potatoes, and artichokes.

35 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets

